

JS

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ON NATIONAL IDENTITY, THE HINDI CINEMA AND YOU

Nepal's striving towards national self-identity has been less successful than her ability to maintain national sovereign-The early Shah rulers brought an end to the uniquely Nepali art and architecture of the Newars bringing with them Rajasthani painting and buildings, court manners and dress. The Ranas in their admiration for the British built palaces designed by western architects and filled them with goods imported from the During the past 20 years the Hindi cinema and the songs thereof have dominated Nepali social life, music, aspirations, dress and personal behavior. It may be added that there are probably few more debased, money-making, repititious, long and boring, totally lacking in redeeming social value cinemas in all Boy finds girl, Boy loses girl. Trials and tribulathe world. tions spiced with dance, song and jokes. Boy gets girl back. Everyone lives happily ever after. The rich are wonderful. poor often are depicted as wicked and stupid. More and more outlandish costumes and sets than an old Doris Day Special and life is meant for song and dance.

Now, the reason for such a diatribe against the Hindi cinema is that it is perhaps the most influential and destructive institution in Nepal today. It is destroying much of Nepal's cultural identity which is what this book is all about. In even remote regions children are singing Hindi cinema songs and in the district centers a new generation imitates the flashy clothes of the movies. New homes of the rich too often attempt to copy the sets from the movies. Thanks to the transistor, the Hindi cinema songs often drown out the music at religious festivals and pujas. For weddings, record players and car battery-powered speakers are lugged into the village so everyone can hear the cinema songs for 48 to 72 hours non-stop. In Kathmandu, it's basically all wedding bands now play. Even at the National Dance Theater the influences are evident.

As a volunteer you must attend the Hindi cinema at least once to know what Nepali culture is up against. If you find yourself digging village culture more than the Hindi cinema-let people know it. If so inclined, collect village art, folk

tales and songs. Put a little money up when a local group wants to present Ram Lila or any of the other classical village dance dramas. Attend weddings and pujas. Pay local musicians to come and play on your veranda, insisting on local music only. At present the government is doing little to encourage the people of Nepal outside of Kathmandu Valley into believing that what they are is an important part of Nepal's culture, something beautiful and worthy of preservation. a good example. Encourage the local school to start a museum of local arts and crafts, to sponsor entertainments of village songs and dances, to use local folk tales in the curriculum. As an outsider whose culture they often admire and strive towards, this is an area in which your interest can often have greater impact than that of many Nepalis. As an outside element you may be the catalyst, re-instilling pride in an already very rich culture.



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"ALL IN THE FAMILY" NEPALI STYLE

Families among the Buddhists and hill tribal groups differ very little from the traditional family in America of parents, grandparents perhaps, and children. Each nucleus family will have its own household and family relationships will be quite close. Father and mother will share the decision-making responsibilities and will gradually turn over most of the authority to the oldest son as they grow old.

But among high caste Hindus, Newars, and Terai people, families are bewildering in their complexity, varying in size from half a dozen to sixty to a hundred to five hundred. For each and every uncle, cousin and in-law there is a separate title and a distinct relationship of power and importance based on age and closeness of ties of blood. Generally father's or grandfather's brothers, followed by mother's, followed by one's own brothers followed by in-laws, denotes the line of power and influence over one's life. The only women who seem to count at all, and they sometimes are beyond all doubt the most powerful and influential members of a family, are mothers and grandmothers.

Family relationships are often as close as they are complex. This is particularly true among the women in families in the Terai and among high caste Hindus and Newars in the Hills where social convention borrowed from the Muslims prefers that the women never be seen in public and thus the family compound and its members becomes their entire world.

The family system is very hierarchical in nature with power residing in the oldest man and woman in the family, each presiding over their separate spheres of the world outside and inside the household and consulting one another on matters of mutual concern. Generally each member of the family is expected to obey and be obeyed by the next member above and below them in status respectively.

Daughters, upon marrying, go to their husband's home and sons generally stay in their father's house unless government service requires them to go beyond the village. Generally all

family revenues are pooled into one fund under the control of the oldest member and sone who may be working and living far from home are generally expected to contribute much of their income to the family coffers. Fathers and grandfathers make not only monetary decisions for the entire family, but also determine who in the family will be educated and to what degree, who will work in the shop or fields, what will be sold or planted, when and with whom sons and daughters will marry, and when daughters may go to their husband's home after visits home. Children are brought up with such a high sense of respect for elders and for authority, with such a complete economic dependence and emotional attachment to family, that decisions are rarely questioned, and almost never disobeyed. As a result, when arguments do take place, decisions crossed, or independent action taken by any member of the family, the result is often a "Battle Royal" totally out of proportion to the merits of the case at hand. Seemingly simple arguments may end up in the separation of families and civil court cases lasting for years over property.

When operating at its best, however, the joint family is a marvel of organization, peace and tranquility. Everyone, regardless of age, education, talent or productivity, has a secure place and appropriate duty to perform. No need for daycare centers, or private nurses when sick. No one gets shuffled off to an old age home. No one out of work has to starve or go on welfare. The wife and children will be looked after and fully taken care of if you want to spend a few years in study abroad, go on a pilgrimage or serve a tour of duty in some remote or undesirable area. No need to go out and search for a mate, or for a widow to spend a lonely life. Even the insane and mentally retarded are accepted as part of the family's responsibility and lead lives of remarkable freedom, acceptance and peace of mind. With so many people to feed one can generally get something to eat at any time of the day or night.

In return for the innumerable services and sense of security that it provides its members, the joint family unfortunately often robs its individual members of a sense of personal responsibility, of self-identity, of creativeness and adventure. As a result individuals often have little motivation or inclination to change and express their individual differences in superficial matters of dress and concern for personal appearance. Where the products of labor are divided equally among all regardless of productivity, job orientation and motivation to excel are often lacking. As such the family system in Nepal, while providing for social stability and performing a myriad of social services, propagates and maintains values which make efforts toward change and development often most difficult.



Volunteers find that family loyalties often outweigh community interests or national goals of development. In fact, family loyalties often outweigh family interests when younger but more highly educated members of a family defer to older family members decisions regarding the expenditure of money, conduct of business, use of new farm methods or continuation of education for girls in the family.

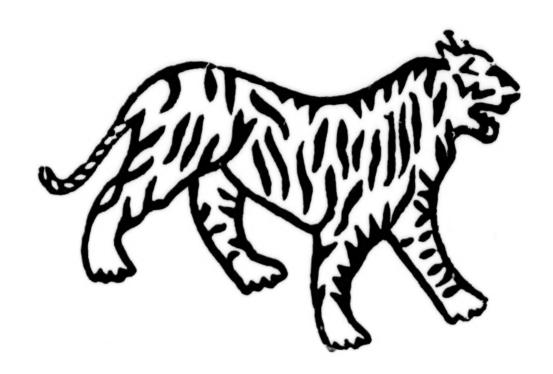
A volunteer must learn that he can seldom deal directly with individuals where family interests are involved, but must consult and work with the entire family, paying particular attention to gain the respect of the older family members who make the final decisions. This often requires the volunteer to be more conservative in appearance, more knowledgeable about customs, more fluent in the local language, and more patient and persuasive in communicating, if he really wants to be an effective volunteer. With individuals of his own generation, having some knowledge of the west and many mutual interests, the volunteer need often make few compromises to be liked and accepted as a friend. To be accepted by an entire family and therefore be in a position to be an effective agent of change for Nepal's development ultimately makes Peace Corps service a more profitable work experience and a more profound educational opportunity.



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GAMES IN NEPAL

Bagh Chal (Goats and Tigers)

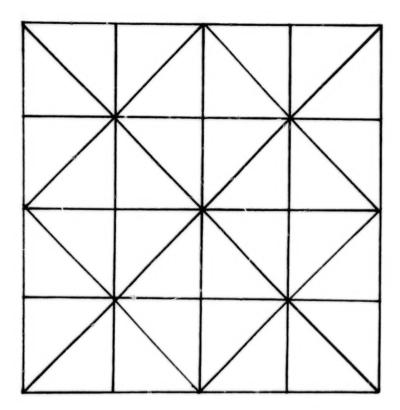


A most deceivingly simple game of village chess.

One player has 4 tigers.

The other player has 20 goats.

The game is an offensive for the tigers--a defensive encirclement for the goats.



The board looks as above.

- 1. In the beginning tigers are placed on the 4 corners.
- 2. Moves between tigers and goats are alternated.
- 3. In one move a tiger may move from one point to the next point or jump over a goat thus capturing it and removing it from the board.
- 4. In the beginning goats are placed on the board one at a time, one tiger being allowed to make 1 move each time. No goat may move until all goats have been placed on the board.
- 5. Tigers may capture goats only by jumping over them following the straight lines on the board.
- 6. The goats defend themselves by giving the tigers no open point on which to land when trying to jump over a goat.
- 7. If the tigers can take 5 goats the game is lost by the goats almost inevitably and a forfeit usually takes place.
- 8. If the goats can encircle the tigers so no movement by any tiger is possible, then the goats win the game.



Goats and Tigers bagh chal

tiger bagh

cow gai

goat bakhra

to move Chaalnu

to eat, to jump over and eliminate from the board khaanu

(to be killed) marnu

(to move from one point on the board to the next) kothaa faalnu

to check the tiger by placing

goats two in a row thunnu

to place new pieces on board (goats) raakhnu

to surround or trap the tigers ghernu



Kabadi Kabadi

There are wet and dry versions of kabadi. The former is more like a fraternity initiation and generally takes place in a freshly plowed and flooded sea of mud at rice planting time. Any field will do for the latter. Teams of equal numbers take sides some distance behind a dividing line. Any player crossing the line into enemy territory must indicate he is holding his breath by constantly crying "kabadi, kabadi, kabadi . . !" If he loses his breath before returning to his own side he is out of the game. Enemy players will attempt to catch and hold any invader until he loses his breath. If an invader from either side can cross into enemy territory, tag an enemy player and return to his own side without losing his breath, then the person tagged is out of the game. The team with the last player left in the game wins.

to	draw a line	line	taannu
on	one side	ekaa	tira
on	the other side	arko	tira
to	catch	samaa	atnu
to	be out, to be defeated	maarr	nu
to	escape	futka	anu
to	surround	gherr	nu
to	touch	chhur	nu

to lose

to win

haarnu

jitnu

Card Games (tas khel haru)

The rules for any card game vary, not only in each area and village and with each group of players; unless you are careful they will vary in the middle of the game. Many of the games have western equivalents and few are hard to learn. The vocabulary here included indicates many of the similarities.

Names of the Nepali Card Games

twenti nine	kaali budi		
flaas	kot piece		
saaiting	satra		

Names of the Cards

Ace	ekkaa	7	sattaa
2	duwaa	8	attaa
3	tirki	9	nahar
4	chowkaa	10	dahar
5	panjaa	Jack	gulaam
6	chhakkaa	Queen	bajeer
7		King	baadshaah baassaa

Terms

hearts	paan	to trump	turup launn	
spades	surat	trick	haath	
diamonds	eet	to take one trick	ek haat khanu	
clubs	chir	41	dick	
trump	turup	declare		



Chess (Buddhi chal)

King Raajaa

Minister (Queen) mantri

Horse (Bishop) ghodaa

Elephant (Knight) haatti

Teatray (castle or rook) kishti

Soldiers (pawn) pyada, sipahi

to move, to Castle chaalnu

to think, to plan moves bichaargarnu, sochnu

to capture khaanu (to eat)

to be captured marnu (to be killed)

to surround or outflank ghernu (to surround)

to check saga lagnu

check mate jitnu-(victory)-to win

to lose harnu - to lose

Nepalese Football (Soccer)

Names of the Positions

Center Right half

Left in Left half

Right in Half back

Left out Full back

Right out Goal keeper

Center half

Terms

a pump pump to hit haannu a lace fittaa to pass paass dinu a bladder blader to trick chhalnu rephree to catch saamatnu crowd bhida to mistake faul hunu hawaa dinu to pump hawaa kasnu to run dagurnu to be hurt chot laagnu to be out out hunu to fall down ladnu to begin suru hunu

to shout laraaunu to be an haaf time

to lose haarnu interval hunu

to finish khatam hunu

"VILLAGE FOES"

On Scorpions

Though Mr. Hagen would have us believe the terai abounds in scorpions, I have only seen one in six years. My Nepali coworker, his little brother and I were seated on the floor preparing supper one evening when little brother let out a shrick. Out from under the bed a scorpion came running across the floor totally ignoring us. My co-worker turned from stirring the dal and with one graceful sweeping gesture clobbered the scorpion and returned the ladle to the dal. And that was the last of the only scorpion I ever met. Recently, however, a PCV from the eastern terai reported to me that there is a local doctor there who has a black scorpion that he puts on patients to cure them.

On Mosquitoes and Flies

Mosquitoes are more prevalent than scorpions. Take your aralen to suppress malaria when in the terai for the incidence of malaria is sharply on the rise. Avoid being bitten by sleeping as high off the ground as possible. Use a mosquito net or screen or put mosquito netting across windows and open doors. Just before sunrise and after sunset mosquitoes will crowd the windows. A little Flit (Indian version of Raid) will quickly clear the house of mosquitoes and flies as well. Where there is electricity invest in a fan. If you live with a family be generous and screen the entire house—but be sure to put some small trap doors in the screens so people can spit out the windows.

The same efforts to reduce the mosquitoes will also curtail the flies. When the hot season arrives and flies multiply by the millions, take additional care to protect your food and water from contamination. Sweets and water which may have been safe during the cold season will become a certain source of dysentery. The flies and mosquitoes are mainly just another hassle--so reducing their number reduces another source of frustration and leaves you a little freer to deal with bigger problems.

On Snakes and Rats

Don't become paranoid! Snakes are not friendly--but then neither are they mean. They will never run over you nor step on you--so please be equally considerate. In fact be thoughtful of them, for given the number of rats and mice they eat, they are one of man's best friends.

In the cold and dry seasons you will rarely see them. When monsoon comes, high ground is at a premium in the terai. As the fields become flooded the rats charge into the villages for food and shelter. Please don't provide either!

Making reasonable and continuous efforts to rat proof your house and to poison or trap those rats that do come in will greatly reduce the likelihood of a snake searching your pantry for a fat rat who has been living off of your poorly stored food. Just learn not to put your hands or feet into or onto things that you cannot see—as stepping on a poor toad in the dark or reaching into a bag of rice and grabbing a squeaking mouse can also be very startling.

When the fields are flooded everyone and everything has to use the same narrow little paths to get about, so learn to carry a flashlight whenever there is a chance of your being caught out after dark even as you soon learn to carry an umbrella on even the sunniest, most cloudless days during the monsoon.

At home sleep as high off of the floor as possible—not just to give the rats room to run around but to avoid all of those very small little pests as mosquitoes, bedbugs, fleas and the like. If these precautions seem insufficient to you then I suggest you keep a peacock (they hate snakes and kill them on sight), a cat (they like the rats and mice) and a mongoose (they hate rats and snakes equally).



MEASUREMENTS IN NEPAL

20 pathi 4 mato muri	1	mana pathi mato muri ropani
Terai 182.25 sq. ft. 20 dhur 20 kattha	1	dhur kattaha bigha
ght Measurement Valleys and Hills (Dry) 12 masa 18 tola (Nepali) 17.1 tola (Indian) 12 pau	1	tola pau pau dharni
Terai (Dry and Liquid) 5 t^la 6 chattak 40 sers	1	chhatak ser maund
Gold and Silver etc. 10 lal 12 masa	-	masa tola - 180 grain
ume Measurement - Hills 33.264 cu. inches 2 mana 4 quruwa 20 pathi	1 1 1	nd Valleys (Dry and Liquid) mana quruwa pathi muri
gth Measurement 18 inches 8000 cubits 1760 yards	1	cubit kosh (2.27 miles) mile
4	Terai 182.25 sq. ft. 20 dhur 20 kattha ght Measurement Valleys and Hills (Dry) 12 masa 18 tola (Nepali) 17.1 tola (Indian) 12 pau Terai (Dry and Liquid) 5 tola 6 chattak 40 sers Gold and Silver etc. 10 lal 12 masa ume Measurement - Hills 33.264 cu. inches 2 mana 4 quruwa 20 pathi gth Measurement 18 inches 8000 cubits	20 pathi 4 mato muri 1 4 mato muri 1 1 Terai 182.25 sq. ft. 20 dhur 20 kattha 1 20 kattha 1 21 masa 18 tola (Nepali) 17.1 tola (Indian) 12 pau 1 Terai (Dry and Liquid) 5 tha 6 chattak 40 sers 1 Gold and Silver etc. 10 lal 12 masa 1 12 masa 1 12 masa 1 14 quruwa 120 pathi 1 15 thes 16 Measurement 18 inches 18000 cubits 1

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5. Standard Weights per Muri of Agricultural Products
  Paddy
                   110.0 lbs.
                                   Buck Wheat
                                                    110.6 lbs.
  Rice
                   115.0 lbs.
                                                    148.0 lbs.
                                   Soyabeans
  Wheat
                   148.0 lbs.
                                   Mas
                                                    135.0 lbs.
                                  Masure
                                                    140.0 lbs.
  Maize Shelled
                   138.0 lbs.
                   148.1 lbs.
                                  Rahar
Mustard
                                                    150.0 lbs.
  Millet
  Barley
                   126.1 lbs.
                                                    127.4 lbs.
6. Conversions
  a) Land Measurements
           Sq. ft. Sq. meter Ropani
                                                     Hectare
 Unit
                                       Bigha
                                              Acre
1 Ropani
             5,476
                                              0.126
                       508.72
                                       0.075
                                                     .0509
1 Bigha
            72,900
                     6,772.66 13.13
                                              1.676
                                                      .6773
           43,560
                               0.80 0.600
1 Acre
                    4,046.87
                                                       .4047
1 Hectare 107,637 10,000.00 19.73 1.483 2.471
  b) Linear
     1 inch
                              2.5 cm.
     1 foot
                              0.3048 Meter
     1 cubit
                              18 inches - 45.72 cm.
     1 mile
                              5,280 ft. - 1,760 yds. - 1.6094 km.
     1 millimeter
                             0.0394 inches
     1 meter
                             39.37 inches - 3.281 ft.
     1 km.
                             0.6214 mile
     1 kosh
                              3,658 Meter - 3.66 km. - 2.27 miles
  c) Weight
     1 grain
                              0.065 gm.
     1 oz.
                              28.35 gm. - 2.42 Indian tola -
                                          2.53 Nepali tola
     1 lb.
                              453.5 gm - .454 kg.
     1 ton (long)
                              2204 lbs. - 1016.064 kg.
     1 ton (short)
                             2000 lbs. - 907.185 kg.
                            2204.6 lbs. - 1000 kg.
     1 ton (metric)
                             180 grain - 11.7 gm. - 0.41 oz.
     1 tola (Indian)
                             171 grain - 11.2 gm. - 0.95 Indian
     l tola (Nepali)
                                                          tola
     1 seer
                              2.057 lbs. - 0.933 kg.
     1 maund
                              82.28 lbs. - 37.32 kg. - 373 quintal
     1 dharni
                              5 lbs. - 2.27 kg. - 12 pau -
                              216 Nepali tola - 205.2 Indian tola
     1 gram
                              0.085 tola
     1 kg.
                              2.205 lbs.
     l quintal
                              220.5 lbs. - 100 kg. - 2.68 maunds
  d) Volume and Capacity
                              16.387 cm<sup>3</sup>
     1 cub. inch
     1 cub. ft.
                              0.0283 M3
                              29.570 \text{ cm}^3 = 1.805 \text{ cub. inch}
     1 fl. oz. (US)
                            28.412 cm3
     1 fl. oz. (Imp)
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1 pint (US)

433.00 cm3

d) Volume and Capacity (cont.) 1 pint (Imp) 568.25 cm³ 3.786 lit. - 0.833 gal. (Imp) 1 gallon (US) 4.546 lit. - 1.2 gal. (US) l gallon (Imp) 1 cm3 0.061 cub. inch - 0.0352 oz.(Imp) 1 pathi 0.0043 M3 1 mana $545.097 \text{ cm}^3 - 33.264 \text{ cub. inch}$ 1 muri 19.22 gal.(Imp) - 24.02 gal.(US) 0.087 M³ - 3.08 cu. ft. 8683 liters - 2.464 bushel 1.244 cu. ft. - 0.035 M³ -1 bushel 35.238 liters l liter 1.06 quarts e) Area 6.452 cm^2 1 sq. inch

1 sq. ft. 1 cm²

1 M.

 $929 \text{ cm}^2 - 0.093 \text{ M}^2$

0.155 sq. inch

10.764 sq. ft.



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